

TEXTBOOK OF MEDICAL TREATMENT. By Sir Derrick Dunlop, Stanley Alstead and Alastair G. Macgregor. Eleventh Edition. (Pp. xiii+720 ; figs. 35. 75s). Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1968.

THE eleventh edition, rather less than two and a half years after the tenth edition, is a welcome revision of an unusually practical and useful textbook. In the preface to the first edition it was hoped that the book would avoid advice of such generality as to be meaningless in practice, quoting "a well-balanced diet should be given"; the editors have managed to enforce this excellent example, although I detected in 'Diseases of the heart and circulation' the phrase "the patient should not be allowed to do anything for himself."

In general the standard of revision of the various sections has been excellent, discussing many recent developments in therapy in perspective. A disappointment was the lack of discussion of much recent work relating to the management of acute myocardial infarction, and in this section there is no mention of the use of pacemakers for acute heart block, quinidine is the only drug mentioned for ventricular arrhythmias, and cardioversion is not mentioned.

The format of the book has been changed, and the text is much more readable in double columns. There has been an improvement in the order of the sections in the book and new sections added on "Anticoagulant therapy" and "Ill-health due to drugs". The appearance of short bibliographies at the end of some of the sections is new, and would be helpful throughout the book. Again there is the valuable glossary of proprietary and approved drug names: it is a practical and useful textbook.

R.J.A.

REPORT ON THE HEALTH OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH OF BELFAST FOR THE YEAR 1967. By James McA. Taggart.

ALTHOUGH I am no great admirer of the News of the World, when I read this report I kept recalling its subtitle 'all life is here', and I recommend the report as bedside reading. Belfast is no mean city. Its latitude is 54° 35" North and longitude 5° 55" West which is important for the masters of 8,682 vessels which entered the port in 1967, coming from some 265 different foreign ports as distant and mysterious as Bandar Mashur (3 ships) and Zyghi (1 ship).

The birth rate was 20.1 per 1,000, and 92.6 per cent of the births were in institutions. The death rate was 10.9 per 1,000 and cancer of the lung a major preventable cause of death.

It was a bad year for gastro-enteritis (602 cases and 22 deaths) but good for slum clearance and the development of health centres and 48.95 inches of rain fell (33.65 inches in 1959).

The staff of the Department of Health permeated everywhere. They inspected abattoirs, they measured air pollution, they discovered 40,029 nuisances and abated 27,667 of them. They took 215 katathermometer readings in dance halls, tested 594 drains on complaint of rats: inspected 1,220 hairdressers, gave 79 antitfy treatments to 30 stabling yards (who could have thought there were still 30 stabling yards in Belfast), seized unsound food (from 1 ton 17 cwt. of currants to 7 lbs. of sugared almonds), visited bakeries (196), pharmacies (270) and rag flock premises (54), analysed countless items of food and drugs from ale to Yorkshire relish and found an orange containing metallic mercury.

They fumigated, controlled mosquitos, treated sewers and prosecuted an ice cream man whose ice cream was deficient in fat. They worked in antenatal clinics, in residential nurseries and in the school medical services. There were 52 health visitors, 10 trainee health visitors and 67 district nurses.

This report records what they did. They did a lot and few people will ever thank them for all they did do. They made Belfast a better and a cleaner and a finer city and each of us who lives or works in the city is indebted to them. I advise medical students to read this report: it is an easy and an interesting way to learn enough to fix any examiner who might ask about public health for 'all life (and death) is here'.

O.L.W.